

Religion and Social Service

Has Christianity No Influence Among the Nations at War?

"What a spectacle we Christians are to the non-Christian world, whom we in our self-righteousness call heathen!" writes Rev. G. Monroe Royce, rector of the Episcopal Church, of New Windsor, N. Y., in the New York Evening Post. "We are spending millions of money in the vain effort to convert these heathen peoples to our way of religion. What a mockery! What a farce."

That Christianity continues to exist in the outward seeming is most true. There are still popes, patriarchs, bishops, missionaries, and thousands of churches where the Bible is read and prayers are said the year around. But if these popes, patriarchs, bishops, missionaries, and churches all combined cannot enforce upon the nations of the Christian world the first principle of religion, the golden rule, then it is perfectly evident that Christianity has broken down—in practice, at least—and the question presents itself to practical minds, why this state of affairs should be. The theory of life that is not workable; upon a mere sentiment which has no practical value. The modern world boasts of its efficiency, of its practical, utilitarian ability, and yet it is spending millions of dollars in the support of Christian churches, Christian ministers, Christian missionaries, whose sole reason for existing is that they undertake to persuade men and nations to live in harmony with the principles of Christianity, which are love to God and man. But the actual conduct and character of the Christian nations of the world at this moment, as revealed by the state of things in Europe, strip the churches and their ministers of all spiritual significance. To put it in plain language, it seems that they are not doing what they profess to do, and what they are paid for doing, and hence there is a vast waste of money and energy.

"Of course, one does not expect—outside of Utopia—a condition of things where all mankind will live according to the laws of love; and moreover, did there actually exist such a state of things, popes, patriarchs, bishops, and churches would hardly be needed."

"But one has no right to expect that, after 1,900 years of civilization calling itself Christian, the church and her ministers should have influence enough, power enough to prevent the savage, the brute instincts of mankind dominating not only kings and other rulers, but the whole body of people composing the nations of Europe. This much we have a right to expect, and that is, the continued influence of all organized Christianity cannot bring about such a result, then it is, I think, perfectly fair to conclude that the church machinery that we have, and that it does not do what it professes to do, and is not worthy the support it is receiving. Of course, I am acting upon the assumption that the people who support the Christian church do so with the expectation that it will not only teach the principles of Christianity as beautiful sentiments, but will insist that at least the fundamental principles of Christianity must be regarded as controlling forces by organized society, such as states."

The Federal Council of the Churches

of Christ in America has lately held a meeting at which resolutions were adopted expressing appreciation to President Wilson for offering the services of the United States in mediation between the European powers. They also endorsed the position taken by the administration disapproving of loans by American capitalists for belligerent purposes. They also resolved to the religious bodies throughout Europe and to the press of each of them, asking that a movement be instituted to urge all Christian families having children in the armies to write to their personal letters, exhorting them, whatever may be the provocation of the enemy, to reduce in every possible way the horrors of war. They also urged the sending of peace resolutions between the United States and different nations, and submit the following new suggestions to the administration of possibilities to be embodied in a universal treaty between nations.

"1. That some definite interval of time, to be mutually agreed upon, shall intervene between the declaration of war and the beginning of active hostilities."

"2. That in the interval a commission of the signatory powers shall make careful investigation and report their findings to the world."

"3. That the signatory powers agree to enforce the observance of the agreement upon the nation that transgresses the treaty, by immediate military intervention."

They suggest also to the President that he appeal to the people of the United States generally to observe as individuals and as groups the most complete non-resistance to the war, such as may be designated "a day of universal prayer in all places of public worship and in the homes of the people to ask the Supreme Ruler to intervene in such ways as his divine wisdom may approve so as to calm the hearts of those who are filled with passion for war, dispose their minds to listen to the counsels of humanity and accept overtures for peace, and bring speedily to their distracted and distressed people the blessing of peace."

"Where are the cohorts of peace?" asks the American Hebrew in analyzing the world crisis, and continues: "Silenced in the presence of the elemental barbaric confusion which now reigns, the church and her teachings have been destroyed, and no man today in the midst of the rival claimants for sympathy, ventures to speak with confidence, nor can he speak with effectiveness, on behalf of international peace. England has right on her side, or Germany, or France, but that no sword has right on its side is a sentiment that finds no expression."

"The church has failed. Throughout the centuries, Christianity has spoken of peace, but nowhere in Christian teachings has there been found a more destructive force than the church. The church has been the right hand of war, ministering words of comfort to the dying soldier, and the church has been the ideal of peace in moments of crisis. The Christian world remains barbaric. The teachings of Christianity have not penetrated."

"Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

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The Appeal of the Church In Behalf of Workingmen

"Labor Sunday" is being observed to-day in 70,000 churches, according to figures collected by the Federal Council of Churches, which organization has received reports that at least 100,000 more churches are to celebrate the day this year than in 1913. It is recommended by the Federal Council that each church have a constructive program for serving the social needs of its community, and suggests the following specified principles for which it asserts the church must stand:

First, The gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of labor to the lowest practicable point, and that degree of leisure for all which is a condition of the highest human life.

Second, A release from employment one day in seven.

Third, A living wage as a minimum in every industry, and the highest wage that each industry can afford to pay.

These propositions were worked out by the commission on the Church and Social Service of the Council, which urges that favorable action upon them be taken by individual churches, by legislative enactments, and other representative bodies.

Tracts presenting the findings of the Pittsburgh survey as to industrial conditions in Allegheny County, Pa., and arguments upholding the above principles will be distributed in many churches to-day to congregations which have been brought together by special invitation given to the factories and shops, as well as to the employers themselves. In some cases the local unions are to attend the services in a body. Many pastors will make use of the opportunity to discuss the social situation in the church to the industrial situation. In some churches the observance of Labor Sunday will be postponed until a later date, in September, because of the absence of pastor and people on vacation.

A Prayer for Workingmen.

O God, Thou mightiest Worker of the

universe, Source of all strength and

Author of all unity, we pray Thee for

our brothers, the industrial workers of

the nation. As their work binds them

together in common toil and danger,

may their hearts be knit together in a

strong sense of their common interests

and destiny. Help them to realize that

the injury of one is a concern of all,

and that the welfare of all must be the

aim of every one. If any of them is

tempted to sell the birthright of his class

for a momentary gain, give him a

larger outlook and a nobler sympathy

with his fellows. Teach them to keep

step in a steady upward march, and in

their own way to fulfill the law of Christ

by bearing the common burdens.

Grant the organizations of labor quiet

patience and prudence in all disputes,

and fairness to see the other side. Save

them from malice and bitterness. Save

them from the headlong folly which

ruins a fair cause and give them wis-

dom resolutely to put aside the two-

edged sword of violence that turns on

those who seize it. Raise up for them

more leaders who are able and brave

heart and give them grace to follow the

wiser counsel.

When they strive for leisure and health

and a better wage do Thou grant them

the aspiration of the noblest, give them

to waste their gain on fleeting passions, but

to use it in building fairer homes and

a nobler manhood. Grant all classes

of our nation a larger comprehension

of the rights and wrongs of labor, and

understand them even in their sins. And

may the upward march of labor, in the

future, be a body of workers, strong of

limb, clear of mind, fair of heart, and

laboring together for the final brother-

hood of all men.

happiness or unhappiness we may cause,

and the influence in linking us to future

generations. Thus are our physical

pleasures or unpleasant surroundings de-

termined. If one has made others

physically happy, sacrificing his own

comfort and time, he is repaid in like

measure. If he has caused physical pain he

will reap by such action surroundings

conducive to his own suffering—no mat-

ter what the motive for his action may

be.

It is said that motive is a mental or

desire force according as it arises from

will or from desire, and reacts accord-

ingly on the mental or moral character.

You would not expect a man to be

rejoiced by the fact that he has caused

others to be happy, if he has done so

from purely selfish motives, causing

physical pleasure, he is entitled to his

reward, no matter what his motive. The

motive is a force generated on the

physical plane, and it is the

good or bad affects alone the higher

elements of the man—determines his

spiritual progress. The motive itself, one

may reap physical comfort and wealth,

but an unhappy life. The motive is

fish, he reaps the same physical sur-

roundings together with his due reward

of loving hearts. That each seed must

bear a harvest after its kind goes on

forces on the physical plane, and the

respective effects of motive and the

result of actions is due to the fact

that each force has the characteristics

of the plane on which it is generated—

the higher the plane the more potent

and persistent the force. Therefore the

motive is more important than the ac-

tion. A mistaken action done with a good

motive is productive of more good to the

world than a good action done with a

bad motive. If a man does a good ac-

tion with a bad motive, for the motive

acting on the character gives rise to a long

series of effects, for the future actions

guided by that character will all be in-

fluenced by the motive which is the

character of the character. Whereas the

action itself brings on the more phys-

ical happiness or unhappiness, according

to its results on the plane, it is in no